A Study on the Behavior and Attitude of University Students Towards Learning and Research

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1.0 Introduction

Now a day, attitude study is gaining importance for its influence on behavior of individuals. The attitude concept is so popular that the social psychologists have assumed it to have influence on social behavior. Social attitudes and personality trait are the composites of behavioral disposition that influences to predict and explain human behavior. There is a credence that attitude has direct sway on behavior. There is a traditional opinion of attitude as umbrella expression in which it encompasses all the elements like emotions, feelings, beliefs, preferences, expectations, values, judgments, principles, appraisals, intentions and opinions (Ajzen, 1991).

The role of attitude on behavior is direct and describes attitude as the basic building matter in the royal edifice of social psychology. The theme attitude is a function of salient behavioral beliefs of individuals which flourishes the outcomes of behavioral attributes.

Attitudes of students may be positive or negative for lesson that resembles the constant and rigid believes gained by the students due to experiences. It is one of the determinants of achievement in learning. Attitude exerts emotional response to some specific situation. (Len & Chris, 2010). Several factors like teacher's potentiality, socio-psychological classroom environment, classroom management and organization have influence on attitudes of the students to learning (Haladyna, Shaughnessy & Shaugnessy 1983).

Development of positive attitude towards learning depends mainly on the role of teachers. So, the teachers must have responsibilities to provide free learning environment for the students. Students having poor attitudes prevent themselves from active participation in the class room.

It is important to find out the ways by which negative attitudes of students can be

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changed into positive attitude and to develop self confidence towards learning. Under this situation awareness should be developed for the negative factors by the teachers and the students should be taken under consideration.

2.0 Background

Attitude is the path of thinking and behaves for the students. The attitude is a dynamic character and is individual dependent. The students bearing negative attitude can easily change their attitude by problem identification prior to correction of the problem. Though the cloud of complexity of attitude, it can be realize by the reactions, feelings and reflected characteristics of the students. The concept of attitude derives from the attempt to understand the regularities in individual's behavior for the judgment of quality by observed evaluation (Olatunde, 2009).

Both positive and negative attitude can be shown by the students toward a specific subject or object or idea. Teachers can determine the student's attitude by observing his behavior. Students who are comfortable in completion of home work and making proper questions in the classroom, definitely show positives attitudes in learning. Feelings and attitudes of the teachers about lesson may affect the student's attitude. Teacher's enthusiasm, efficiency in teaching and presentation mostly affects student's attitude towards learning. When students present negative attitudes in learning, teachers and parents have to take necessary measure to change the attitude in positive form towards learning. Children's attitude is more easy to change rather than adolescent's attitude. So that, good and positive attitude should be given by the parents to the students in early life. Students may have poor attitude in learning at the primary school level. With the advancement of age, the students may show positive appearance towards learning of curriculum. This is an environmental challenge that the students gain more complex mind and thought by brain growth and development.

The students bear negative attitude because of the huge information to adopt and time to spent for learning in classes. Cramped syllabus in higher classes, broad areas of

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subjects, monotony in curriculum may often led a lot of students to possess negative attitude towards learning.

In order to make students bear more positive attitude in learning, people around them, especially the teachers and parents, have to give opportunities and time to engage with the processes and the procedures of learning (Yang and Lau, 2003). Teachers and parents are very influential in the developments of students. So, the students can be motivated to bear positive attitude toward learning by the teachers and parents. Peers and other students and their class room competition may increase the attitude in learning. Other students' opinion on teacher's personality and subject curriculum and course content can affect students' attitude in learning. This is because; students are easily influenced by people of their own age.

Previous bad or negative experiences can also affect the students' current attitude towards learning. Students with a negative attitude toward chemistry may not grasp the concept of chemistry because they do not see the relevance to their interest and area. Knowing the basic and schemata of the subject is important to succeed at a higher level. That is why stressed on the importance of positive attitude at an early age (Washburne, 1936).

3.0 Problem Statement

The study of attitude and behavior is significant to university students in general higher study. The University as an educational institute as maxima, would be benefitted by knowing the different spectrums of students attitude and behavior in learning the knowledge and fact finding research activities. The research work and also learning theories and principles of education tend to assist in developing changes in attitude and behavior of university students in a positive way.

As students are the representatives of the society, they have the social responsibilities to match their roles as acceptor of traditional ethos of learning; assimilator of acquired

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knowledge; discoverer of unwind truths by research as well as donor of significant level of education in the wheel of progress in behavior and attitude development. Moreover, the study will furnish a clear picture of variation in attitudes and behaviors of higher study students, in general or any imposed learning activities and /or research activity.

A few works and studies may be done in the area of attitude development of students, but the concept of study of attitudes and behaviors of university students in the way of learning and research seems to be pristine with its outcome.

The problem of this research is to assess the behaviors and attitudes of university students in learning and finding environment. The study will pin point the attitude and behavioral changes of university students only as the representative of terminal or higher study level keeping in view of carrier development.

4.0 Previous Work

In modern era, the back bone of the world's society is education in the frame of learning and knowledge sharing. Accumulation of knowledge may bring variation in behaviors or may develop attitudes of the students. The students bearing positive attitude in higher study may also have significant attitude towards research. As per Braten (2006), attitudes of students to learning assist their participation. In different learning activities. Study of Pierce et al. (2007), revealed that students' behavior is affected by their emotions, beliefs and interest about learning. Positive attitudes execute positive behaviours toward any courses of study or research work (Yudko, Hirakawa & Chi, 2007). Rula (2006) recealed that learning is affected by positive attitudes towards a particular subject.

According to Pierce et al. (2007), positive attitudes may resulte in improved learning toward mathematics lessons. Liaw et al. (2007) studied on attitudes towards e-learning on college instructors and students. The extensive research stated that positive

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attitudes are made up of emotions like self-sufficiency, enjoyment and usefulness. Merisuo-Storm (2007) worked on the success of foreign language learning of students may have significant role on students' attitudes and motivation.

As per the study of Watters & Watters (2007), students performed harder to learn about knowledge, are believed to be essential and effective in their self-processing and development and effective in their tentative Jobs.

5.0 Purpose of the Study

Main purpose of the study is to assess variations in behavior and attitudes of the university students in two different spectrums viz., towards learning and towards research. Carrier development of university students is the fundamental role of any course that brings social responsibility of the students and can be performed only by changing behavior and attitudes of them.

6.0 Aims and Objectives

Aims and objectives of the study are:

i. To determine the perception of students about learning and research in universities.

ii. To examine the factors influencing student behaviour and attitude towards learning

iii. To examine the factors influencing student behaviour and attitude towards research

iv. To investigate how the students' behaviour and attitude affects their learning

v. To investigate how the students' behaviour and attitude affects on research

iv. To seek recommendations on how to improve students behaviour and attitude towards learning and research

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7.0 Research Questions:

Based on the above objectives, the following research questions are framed

RQ1: What are the behaviours of students towards learning?

RQ2: What are the behaviours of students towards research?

RQ3: What are the attitudes of students towards learning?

RQ4: What are the attitudes of students towards research?

RQ5: What factors influenced students' attitude and behavio towards learning and research?

RQ6: How does the students' behavior and attitude impact on their learning and research?

RQ7: In which ways could the student attitude be improved towards better learning?

8.0 Proposed methodology

8.1 Research method

The research methodology includes the details about data collection method, sampling technique and size, sample size and statistical tools used to analyze data collection. This section highlights or discusses how the study was conducted. It outlines the procedure and strategies which were used to collect and analyze data.

8.2 Research Design

A cross-sectional survey was used to collect data from the sampled students. The rationale for using cross-sectional survey was generally to attain a snapshot of conditions, attitudes, and/or events at a single point in time.

8.3 Sample and Sampling Procedure

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The size of the sample for this study will be 150 students or more from one or more uninersity. For the purpose of this study, simple random sampling will be used to sample respondents. To ensure that every course of the university as well as every enrolled student will have a chance to be included in the selected sample, a simple random sampling procedure will be employed.

8.4 Tools/Materials:

The data will be collected through a questionnaire consisting of 40 statements, all pertaining to behavior and attitude of university students. Positive and negative statements will be included in the questionnaire. The respondents will be asked to rate each of the statements on a five-point Likert scale (where 1 denotes strongly disagree, 2 denotes disagree, 3 denotes undecided, 4 denotes agree and 5 denotes strongly agree). These 40 statements/ questions will be finalized after a thorough review of literature and expert opinion all the statements reflected the student attitude learning.

8.4 Procedure:

Before collecting the data field visits will be done. Pilot surveys of questionnaire will be conducted. At the initial stage of field work each university will be numbered and rapport will be established with the respondents for generating honest responses. Respondents will be included from each of the university. Assessment will be done individually in Bengali or Hindi and English language. After the respondents completed the rating of statements, data will be also collected about the perception on the education system and other miscellaneous matters through open ended questions.

9.0 Chapterisation

The proposed research work can be divided into following sub-chapters:

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Chapter I - Introduction: This is the first chapter. It will be dealt with the generalized idea, background, principles and problem of research. It depends generally on primary source of data. It gives a theoretical shape of the goal of the researcher. It includes significance of the study, research objectives, research questionnaire, answer key, scope and limitations of the research.

Chapter II – Literature Review: This chapter will furnish in-depth analyses of previous researchers to fill the study objectives in a chronological fashion. This chapter will clarify the research gap and construct a continuous theoretical drawback of previous researchers.

Chapter III – Research Methodology: This chapter will involve screening of appropriate research methods applicable in this research. It deals with research philosophy, research design, ethical considerations, target population, sampling area, sample size and appropriate sampling techniques. This chapter will also include source of data collection, research accuracy, reliability and validity of the research.

Chapter IV- Data analysis and findings: This chapter will flourish the quantitative and qualitative analysis of collected data. On the basis of sampling pattern, researchers analyse, interpret, find and evaluate the overall discovery.

Chapter V Discussion, Conclusion, and recommendations:

This chapter will present the discussion of problem based on data analysis and statistical interpretation with recommendations of previous researchers. Finally, this chapter will screen answers of the research questions or objectives set for the research. This chapter will display strategies and recommendations applicable for future research.

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